# Chichester District Council

**Shop Front Grant**

Guidance Notes

The Shop Front Grant is designed to improve frontages therefore improving the overall look and feel of the retail centres and parades in the district. The objective is to support small independent businesses in these centres.

The grant is aimed at supporting ‘high street’ independent businesses to:

* update the look and feel of the exterior to improve and enhance their branding
* improve and redecorate the exterior of the premises
* remove any redundant wiring and boxes on the shop front

The grant made will be 50% of eligible costs (**excluding VAT**) up to a maximum contribution of £3,000. BAC’s payment will be made to the organisation that has made the grant application and on receipt of paid invoices. **Work must NOT be undertaken until written approval from the Council is received.**

#### **Eligibility**

* Businesses who have received a grant for the purposes of shop front improvements within the last 4 years will not be eligible to apply.
* Applications must be completed fully - incomplete applications will not be considered
* Businesses must be based on the high street or in a parade of shops.
* Applications will be considered from independent businesses that have a total of six or fewer shop premises.
* An applicant/retailer must have no disputes with the Council
* The quotes for the improvement works that accompanies the application must be on formal letter headed paper and where possible the contractor should be based in the Chichester District.
* A photograph of the existing shop front must accompany the application.
* If the contractor is a family member or has an interest in your business, this must be stated on the application form and a further quote must be provided by another contractor.
* Shop frontage improvements works must be undertaken by a competent contractor/reputable company.
* If planning permission or advertising consent is required, the cost of the application can be added in to the project costs. The applicant can check whether they require planning permissions via the Council’s website

[Planning applications - Chichester District Council](https://www.chichester.gov.uk/planning-applications)

* Any necessary planning consent for the works must be sought prior to commencing the project; otherwise, the offer of the grant support shall be withdrawn. A grant will not be paid if permissions required are not in place.
* A grant cannot be sought for retrospective projects. Approval must be given prior to the work commencing.
* Though the Council will consider a variety of applications, they must meet the criteria as above.
* The project must be completed within 6 months from the date the grant is approved.
* Applicant must provide feedback on the project within 6 months of completion of the project, regarding the effectiveness of the grant as and when requested
* Grant applications will be processed on a first come first served basis
* On completion of projects, applicants must provide a photograph of the new shopfront as we will require evidence of work carried out and applicants must submit paid invoices/receipts. We will need to see proof that the invoice(s) have been paid prior to the council making the grant payment.
* The Council reserves the right to reject applications.

#### **Grant Procedure**

**Stages:**

**Applicant to complete an ‘Expression of Interest Form’ by the stated deadline**

**All Expressions of Interest will be assessed, and successful applicants will be invited to submit a full application**

* 1. Applicant must submit a completed application with the quote for the works attached. (Where possible the supplier/provider should be based in the Chichester District). **An incomplete application will not be formally registered in the grant process.**
  2. **Completed applications will be processed on a first come first served basis**
  3. Checks are carried out with other internal Council services to ensure that the applicant/retailer does not have any disputes with the Council.
  4. The application documents will be discussed with a planning officer, in order to establish whether any planning permissions need to be applied for, in order for the proposed changes/updates to be made to the shopfront. The outcome of this will be communicated to the applicant as soon as possible.
  5. The Council may arrange a visit with the retailer and/or gather current evidence to check against future changes and developments of project
  6. The Council will inform applicant of Council’s decision by email
  7. The applicant will be issued with a Grant Agreement which must be signed and returned to the Council before commencement of the project.
  8. Applicant to commence project as outlined in the application form
  9. Applicant to inform the Council of completion of the project by providing a copy of final invoice(s) and proof of payment, and a photograph of the new improved shop front. Applicant must not pay for any part of the project with cash as this makes it difficult for the Council to obtain the evidence required to pay the grant award.
  10. The Council may arrange a further visit with the retailer prior to payment of grant.
  11. Payment of the grant will be sent to the applicant via BACs. We are unable to make payments in instalments.
  12. The Council will conduct evaluation through follow up contact.

THE GRANT OFFER IS MADE ON THE STRICT CONDITION THAT IT IS USED TOWARDS THE SPECIFIED WORKS AS DETAILED IN THE APPLICATION FORM.